

o. 62,616
S. 83,355

Front Page Edit Page Other Page

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CDC Head Says LBJ Victim Of Bad Advice

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ANAHEIM — President Johnson is the victim of bad advice, Simon (Si) Cassidy, 57, president of the California Democratic Council (CDC) declared here Sunday.

Addressing several score delegates to the CDC's 34th Congressional District meeting at the Disneyland Hotel, the onetime newspaper owner - publisher, lashed out at the President's handling of both the Viet Nam war and the Dominican Republic crisis.

"I agree with President Johnson's recent evaluation of himself as a 'good cowboy,'" the tall, slender CDC proxy said.

"I think the President furnished us with a good description," he said. "He thinks like a cowboy. The cowboy had a sort of primitive mind — taking people at their face value."

Cassidy said the late President Kennedy was a more sophisticated man and could "better evaluate the advice he received from persons close to him in the administration."

"Lyndon Johnson is a far more provincial man," he said.

"He should remember that the 1964 vote was not an overwhelming mandate for Lyndon Johnson, that he got into the Presidency through a terrible tragedy — Dallas.

"In 1964," Cassidy continued, "people weren't saying we want LBJ. Rather they were saying we don't want Barry Goldwater,

"They were saying we don't want a trigger - happy, hip-shooting guy like Goldwater who could get this country into trouble without thinking what he was doing.

"A lot of Americans don't like what they have today," Cassidy said. "I am one of them."

In a press conference which followed his address to the delegates, Cassidy heaped more coals on his fires of Presidential criticism.

He belabored the President for his references to the "53 communists" in the rebel ranks at Santo Domingo.

"I read newspaper stories of personal interviews which correspondents have had with rebel leaders at Santa Domingo," Cassidy said. "These leaders are identified by name and occupation. One was a businessman with branch offices in Puerto Rico and New York City. Another was head of a top motor car agency on the island.

"Since when do we hear of communists with positions like these?"

Cassidy said he doesn't like the escalation of the Viet Nam war.

He admitted, however, that he has no constructive suggestions as to how the Viet Nam and the Dominican problems should be handled.

"I just don't like the way

they are being handled," he declared sharply. "You might look at a painting and decide you don't like it without knowing exactly why or even being a painter."

To the delegates Cassidy hinted broadly that he feels the administration has been poorly advised by those in the nation's military and industrial circles.

He cited President Eisenhower's warning that the people should be on guard against an attempted take-over of the nation by a military - industrial complex.

Cassidy told delegates the right to criticize is at the very foundation of democratic society.

"The President is no more immune to criticism than I am," he said. "I don't buy the 'our leader' concept of the Presidency. I don't feel anyone should remain silent because, as some say, the President knows more about the subject.

"Of course he does know more than I do or anyone else does. He receives information from the CIA and the FBI and other agencies.

"But if we don't know enough to make an intelligent criticism then I say we should find out why the government is withholding information from us.

"After all, the very basis of democracy is an informed electorate."